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THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL
OF THE
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PSYCHIC INVESTIGATION

EDITOR - MR. B. ABDY COLLINS, C.I.E.

Responsibility for the contents of any article appearing in these Transactions rests entirely with the contributor and not with the Institute.

VOL. XX

JULY, 1941

No. 2

EDITORIAL NOTES

In our last issue Mrs. McKenzie took her own farewell to her readers. Her editorship lasted for five years only, but she has been closely associated with PSYCHIC SCIENCE ever since its first appearance in 1922. She believes that she may have contributed to every number in one way or another and we hope that this record will continue unbroken.

Her relinquishment of control will cause deep regret among all readers and especially the members of the old British College of which she was one of the founders and chief pillars. Her intellect, her personality, her friendliness and her literary skill contributed to a marked degree to the success of the College and the Journal. We will not repeat the brief account of her life given along with an excellent photograph in PSYCHIC SCIENCE for July, 1930, but on our own behalf we would like to record our thanks for the help and advice which she has always given so ungrudgingly and we feel sure that we may say the same for all our members. Mrs. McKenzie remains a Vice-President of the Institute to which her experience and knowledge will always be invaluable.

* * *

We were asked the other day why we were laying so much emphasis on the investigation of claims to astral projection and on experiments by means of psychometry to establish the limits of the powers of the subconscious. These ideas are not mere fads. Experiments on these lines constitute some of the most fundamental research yet to be done on psychic phenomena. Some insistence and repetition is

necessary because the attention of those engaged on psychical research is too rigidly focussed in other directions. Both these lines of research have the advantage that they can be pursued by the experimental method to which science rightly attaches so much importance. If astral projection could be established to the satisfaction of the great body of physiologists, psychologists and philosophers, they would at once admit the reality of the soul and the possibility, if not the probability of survival, and the great battle against materialism would have been won. If it could be proved to them that the subconscious could not extract from the mind of a distant person facts regarding the life of someone deceased which did not directly affect the life of that person, contact with the "dead" would be admitted by all serious investigators. The only alternative would be the hypothesis of the cosmic mind, which we believe is no longer put forward seriously, and at any rate does not square with the materialistic scheme.

* * *

So far as we know, no serious investigation into the claims of astral projection has yet been undertaken or, if it has, then no results have been published. Dr. Osty has established the reality of psychometry and its value as a means of directing and controlling the the clairvoyant faculty, and more recently Dr. Hettinger has confirmed his results, but in spite of Bozzano's writings psychical research in this country does not seem to have realised the possibilities. The field is now cleared for definite experiments on the lines suggested in the article in this issue.

* * *

We regret to learn that Mr. G. H. Lethem is to give up the editorship of *Light* on September 6th. All who read this paper will recognise what a severe loss his resignation will mean. He has conducted it with such ability and literary skill and displayed such sincerity and conviction in his editorials that he will be hard to replace. Those who have come into contact with him must have been impressed also by his kindness and modesty. Mr. C. R. Cammell, who has recently contributed regularly to *Light*, is to succeed him and we wish him all success.

Those who remember the late Dr. Glyn Hamilton's accounts of his carefully conducted experiments in materialisation, which appeared in *PSYCHIC SCIENCE* some years ago, should read, if they have not done so, his wife's description in *Light* for May 8th of the way in which R. L. Stevenson appears to have attempted to establish his identity through "Elizabeth M.," one of Dr. Glyn Hamilton's mediums. She seems to have been a resident in their household and was uneducated and knew nothing of Stevenson or any other classical writer. One is inclined to be somewhat suspicious of alleged attempts by famous men to communicate through circles with which they have no particular link, but in this case the evidence is strong. A peculiar technique was developed. The medium when in deep trance had a vision which she described and then recorded a script which amplified and explained the vision. These communications were made a number of years ago during Dr. Hamilton's life, and seem now to have been published for the first time. It is a pity they are not described in more detail or the original records given to the world.

* * *

Prediction for May carries on its first page an article by its editor entitled "The Need of the Hour." It is in fact an appeal to the Society for Psychical Research to adopt a more vigorous policy, especially in regard to the publication of its results. Many people were hopeful when a few years ago it was announced that selections from its proceedings were to be published under various heads, so as to be more easily available to the public. The result was disappointing. Except for Mr. Saltmarsh's volume on Cross-correspondences the booklets fell somewhat flat. The cases chosen were usually striking enough, but the comments and inferences were halting and contradictory. It is no wonder that there is a call for something better. A book like Sir Ernest Bennett's *Apparitions and Haunted Houses* is a good model.

* * *

Mr. Leigh also traces a gradual development of a belief in survival as a proved fact in the addresses of the distinguished Presidents up to a certain point, say till 20 years or more after

the society's foundation. Since then it is hinted there is a hesitation and uncertainty and the article appeals to the men of science and learning who are members of the Society to make their views public. We are not sure that this is a true reading of the position. There have always been among the leaders of the Society those who have been favourable to the hypothesis of survival and those who have not, but it is true that nowadays we seem to hear too much from the sceptics and the undecided and too little from those who have made up their minds. It is time that the latter asserted their influence more boldly in the conduct of the society's affairs. At this crisis in the world's history those with knowledge must show courage and leadership or free institutions will perish and along with them all bodies interested in the spiritual side of man's nature.

* * *

Financial considerations have made it imperative to cut down severely the size of this issue. Our circulation is too small to justify more. If only every reader would make it his or her business to get one more subscriber, our troubles would be over. Even in war-time with crushing taxation five shillings is very little. We appeal to our readers to do this much. Success in this smaller sphere would probably mean some extra members for the Institute too and unless they can be obtained, the outlook is black. Those who can afford it might order an extra copy for one year for a friend. We hope everyone will determine to do something.

* * *

The Journal of the American S.P.R. contains an excellent exposition of the ideas of Henri Bergson, the world-famous philosopher, who died in Paris in January last. The article naturally is mainly concerned with his attitude to psychical research. Bergson's name is likely to rank with that of Kant as one of the great philosophers of this and the last century. It is important therefore to realize that not only did he accept the office of President of our S.P.R. but always stressed the great value of psychical research and championed the reality of some psychic facts and their importance in any interpretation of life and the universe.

SOME ROSEMARY POINTS OF CONTACT

BY FREDERIC H. WOOD, Mus.D., A.R.C.M., Hon.R.C.M.

Most of our readers will know something of Rosemary's work, and some of the results attained by her Egyptian guide, Nona. Much of it has been told in three books which are in the Institute library, *After Thirty Centuries*, *Ancient Egypt Speaks*, and, more recently, *This Egyptian Miracle*. The last-named also contains a full translation of the gramophone record in the 'dead' Egyptian tongue, which was made under Dr. Fodor's supervision at the Institute on July 14th, 1938, and heard by many members at my lecture there the same evening.

Messrs. Rider will shortly issue a new book of mine entitled *Mediumship and War*. As the title implies, this will deal with war-contacts and problems arising out of the war. Apart from a single chapter on 'War-commentaries in Ancient Egyptian,' no reference will be made to the special feature which has made this case unique. The rest of the book will deal with the comments of the various Rosemary guides from the Italian conquest of Abyssinia down to the end of 1940, and special chapters will deal with the uses of psychic power in war-time, and with post-war problems. A special Epilogue dealing with the latter has been written for the book by the Lady Nona. It deserves to be carefully studied by those who will have the difficult task of settling these problems when the war is over.

Psychic contact naturally pre-supposes something and somebody with whom such contact can be made. Argument on that point can be left to those investigators who have not yet passed out of the kindergarten class of real psychic research.

An overwhelming amount of evidence shows that their existence is established. Survival is proved, and ought long ago to have been endorsed, even by the S.P.R. It is high time we devoted our attention rather to the problems which lie behind and beyond it. Spirit-guidance is no less a fact, and so is the contact we can make through mediumship with other worlds of conscious intelligence around us.

As an investigator, I am perhaps fortunate in being able to work with a medium who is well-educated, critical, and able to express her sensations accurately and informatively. I am equally fortunate in her guides, as well as my own, who are always ready to discuss these points of contact. The latter may be classified as (*a*) visual, (*b*) aural, (*c*) through sensation, and (*d*) through the mind of the medium. In other words, what Rosemary sees, hears, feels, or thinks: what comes by clairvoyance, clairaudience, nervous reaction, and intuition; these are the 'reception areas,' so to speak, on our side through which contact is made. Let us take them in order.

Clairvoyance is much wider in its application than the mere seeing of 'spirit-forms,' though that is one of its most useful functions. Thirty years ago I observed it in many sittings with that truly great clairvoyant, Tom Tyrrell. Helen Hughes is one of many who have the same gift to-day. The communicators appear to present themselves in any form or dress they choose, and to be able to create pictures of objects which they show for the purpose of proving identity.

But Rosemary's clairvoyance goes further. It can also describe incidents which may be taking place, perhaps, on the other side of the world (travelling clairvoyance); or it may tap etheric records in the atmosphere of events which happened long ago. They are not static, but full of movement and even sound. Sometimes they are enclosed in buildings, like that which Rosemary described in Romsey Abbey (Hants.), where she saw a twelfth-century service being led by the abbess of that date, and heard the nuns singing a plainsong melody which I was afterwards able to date to that period. Others are just as vivid in the open-air, like the duel Rosemary saw between two Roman soldiers on the Sussex Downs above Lewes, and the much older impression of Le Moustier men, hairy, bow-legged, and muttering pre-lingual noises as they ran over the hill above Wookey Hole in Somerset. This last impression may have been anything up to 250,000 years old, but the ether still retained an impression of it. At Bignor, in Sussex, she described the inhabitants of the Roman villa as they went about their work at the time of the Roman occupation. There was no suggestion that the entities in all these cases were real. As Nona afterwards explained, they

were impressions left on the ether, of incidents which involved some emotional intensity at the time of their recording.

Other cases of clairvoyance which do imply intelligent response, however, have frequently been recorded. One of the best was a most evidential contact with John Bunyan (see my pamphlet *A Challenge to Sceptics*, published by *The Two Worlds*, Manchester). These would suggest that 'dead' people are not dead at all, and under certain circumstances they may be brought from quite remote planes of existence for the purpose of contact. The most curious feature of this type of contact is that the communicator appears to re-enter what Miss Cummins' guides call 'The Shell of Memory,' and re-assume, for the time being, the ideas and idiomatic forms of speech peculiar to date of his carth-life. It was probably through an extension of this principle that Nona revived her memory of Egyptian speech of 1500 B.C. In some cases there appears to be a link with some former incarnation of our own, like that I made with Seneca and published in *Light* (Feb. 6th, 1941), which will also be quoted in my new book. Rosemary's own subconscious memory of the Egyptian tongue has been demonstrated many times (see *This Egyptian Miracle*, Chapter 3). Many descriptions of the 'spirit-world'—a poor term, but it must serve—are recorded. They suggest that the medium's etheric vision, or 'kaw-ért' as the old Egyptians called it, was temporarily transplanted there. Most of us visit that world in sleep, but the 'kaw-ért' is seldom able to impress the scenes upon the memory for recollection in our conscious state.

Turning next to clairsaudience, it is doubtful whether the communications made to Rosemary are produced by sound-vibration. They are more probably made by thought-transmission. Our communication to the 'spirit-world' is probably made by a similar process.

"I do not see or hear you as you would understand those terms," said my brother J. D. W., on March 9th, 1935.

"It is as if I were on the other side of a screen. I hear your voice as Rose hears voices, in the mind. But I get your exact thought."

Nona's Egyptian xenoglossy appears to be transmitted in the same way. That too is exact, consistent, and always

grammatically correct. But it appears to be a mind-impression rather than an audible one.

Closely connected with this problem of course is telepathy. I am convinced that this is the chief method of communication on the other side. The few successful experiments on this side, made by Dr. Rhine and others, should be regarded less as an abnormal development of a physical faculty, and more as a spiritual faculty operating with difficulty in the incarnate state, which is not its natural element. On deck the deep-sea diver may breathe naturally; but under the sea he can only do so with difficulty and by special provisions for the purpose. Like clairvoyance, telepathy sometimes 'travels,' and in such cases sound-vibrations may be perceived. When Yugo-Slavia decided to fight Hitler, Rosemary's etheric self went there, apparently, saw the people, witnessed their enthusiasm, and Rosemary hummed (for me to record) a fine tune being played by their bands. It was a tune new to us both, but a fortnight later we both heard and identified it on the radio. It was the national anthem of that gallant people.

The foregoing may be called points of contact from our side. But mediumship is two-sided. Like the 'quality of mercy,' 'it blesseth him that gives and him that takes,' as Shakespeare put it. Mediums like Rosemary are often used both as 'observation-posts' and for 'listening-in,' by disembodied people—a better and more correct term than 'spirits.' My mother, S. E. W., expressed it in these words on June 2nd, 1937:—

"It is very hard to see your world at all, except through mediums. I hear your music, more faintly than you do, but only because that vibration more nearly approaches ours."

In fact, contact with the other side may be said to be governed by an approximation of vibration, and disembodied people appear to use this principle actively. Another communicator told me that Vaughan-Williams' fine tune to 'For all the saints' was used by them when they wished to make a massed contact with us in thought, and that whenever this great tune was sung on our side by a massed congregation it provided one of the best links they had yet discovered. My grandfather, H. D.—a musician in earth-life—still takes a keen delight in listening to my music through Rosemary's

ears. On one occasion when she was present at a musical festival where I was adjudicating, H. D. heard all the competitors by these means.

"I could feel her mind registering opinions,"

he wrote afterwards, but these did not affect his enjoyment, nor the forming of his own independent opinions.

Thirdly, the points of contact may be studied through the medium's sensations. Much can be learned from Rosemary's comments before, during, and after the sitting. The lowering of the bodily temperature, and the temporary sickness after a sitting are common symptoms. After one long clairvoyance she complained that her head had been 'clamped as in a vice.' After Nona had written the great Epilogue to our new book, Rosemary said,

"I seemed to be enveloped from head to foot in a sort of white chiffony material, cobwebby stuff which was drawn up gradually when the writing finished until it seemed to pass out of the top of my head. Then Nona was gone."

This may have been ectoplasm, of course, or a super-imposing of Nona's personality in a partially materialised form.

Lastly, the contact through the mind is brought about by a synchronisation of vibration between guide and medium.

"Her mind blends with mine,"

Nona told me on April 19th, 1934.

"It is quick to apprehend my difficulty when I am at a loss for a word. When this occurs I sometimes present a picture, and her own mind immediately finds a word for it."

Pictures are often presented by chance-communicators for purposes of identity, as every student knows. Here is one which I publish for the first time. On May 10th, 1939 a long message was written through Rosemary's hand by a stranger, dealing with the world situation at that time. It ended,

"Pray then that war may be avoided. The youth of the whole civilised world is being harnessed to destroy itself at the bidding of pride and brute selfishness. May your leaders pray, and look beyond ambitions for state, trade, or peace for peace's sake!"

Rosemary then described this communicator as 'an Englishman not long passed over, who had written much: a tall, thin man whose left hand often rested on the lapel

of his coat when speaking, his right often behind his back. He walked about the room restlessly, head bent, brow furrowed in thought. There was a slight stoop from the shoulders.' Then Rosemary saw him

"in a large handsome room with two other people. One was a man with a beard, with his head resting on one hand; the other a lady with a calm, dignified face, yet with alert eyes which followed the tall man as he moved about the room. She was dressed in a Victorian costume. All three were discussing something which must be done to settle the vexed problem of psychic evidences."

Now why did this communicator—who was obviously the late Lord Balfour—present this picture of himself and Mrs. Sidgwick and F. W. H. Myers? Rosemary knew very little of Arthur J. Balfour and nothing at all of the other two. She is not in the least interested in the S.P.R., nor did she know of the circumstances under which it was founded by these three people with others in the early eighties of last century. Why did Balfour present an earth-memory in this form? Because, like many another 'deceased' Englishman, he foresaw the impending catastrophe and wished to warn his country. None knew better than he that merely to sign his name, to spell it afterwards through the table (the method he actually chose) would not have been evidential.

Mind-contact with those on this side, by intuition, is another development of Rosemary's mediumship. She reads my unspoken thought without difficulty, especially if it has been preceded by some degree of mental stress. Part of the price mediums pay for their gift is that they are often cognisant of what is passing in the minds of complete strangers, in the bus, the tram, or the train. Rosemary finds this faculty distressing at times, but being a natural healer she is often able to bring relief and comfort without the stranger knowing its source. There are other points of contact more difficult to define. Psychometry of letters, for instance, has often enabled me to get a complete picture of an unknown correspondent whose letter was handed to Rosemary. Not knowing the writer, and without reading the letter but merely by touching the folded sheet in the envelope, she has frequently given me a helpful character sketch of the writer, and what he was thinking at the time he wrote. Other mediums are sometimes

used by detectives for a similar purpose. I do not attempt to explain the process, but if we leave the imprint of our emotions on the ether, as proved in the etheric impression already discussed, we probably leave not only our fingerprints but the impress of our personality upon everything we touch.

Finally, I want to thank our new editor for inviting me to write this article, not only because Rosemary and I have many links with the Institute, but also because of the great interest taken in our case by a former editor (the late Stanley De Brath), which led to the publication in this Journal of some of the most important articles I ever wrote. In this present article I have not touched upon the greatest achievement of the Rosemary mediumship, the proofs of extended survival and reincarnation brought by Nona's restoration of the lost speech of Ancient Egypt. The translation of the 3,000 odd sentences in that tongue already on record is at present occupying nearly all my spare time; but all this work has been made veridically more valuable by the fact that the Institute 'set its seal'—Nona used that very phrase in Egyptian (see T.E.M.192.193) when making the record—upon our labours. The value of research such as ours depends on a combination of factors each of which must be developed to perfection as far as circumstances allow. A gifted medium can always be assured of a highly-developed guide. The other side will see to that. But unless she can be protected from this side too, she will suffer far more than the average person from the common trials of life. The best mediums are always hypersensitive. Then again, the work must be carefully recorded, analysed, edited, and indexed. All this has become a whole-time task in the present case if it is to be done properly, and the burden has been increased by the necessity of placing beyond criticism our great discovery of the speech of the Pharaohs. Public opinion will ultimately force our Egyptian scholars to examine our claims. They will then perhaps realise, not only what they have missed, but how much they could have saved my labour and time. In any case, the records I shall leave behind will be valued by future scholars who may be less, but could not be more, prejudiced against psychic research than those with whom I had the misfortune to be contemporary.

My thirty years' experience as a psychic investigator, and over ten years' close study of the Rosemary mediumship has convinced me that the only psychic research now worthy of the name is that which, acknowledging survival as proved and spirit-guidance as a fact, is now ready to build on those sure foundations a new science. But it must be one which is not fettered by preconceptions from other sciences. Its standards of evidence are as high as theirs, but its methods may be different, since it deals with phenomena hitherto beyond their reach and ken.

THE TRUTH ABOUT SPIRITUALISM

By Harold Anson. (Student Christian Movement Press, 2/-)

Space forbids a longer review of this little book by the Master of the Temple who was one of the members of the Archbishop's committee and, it is believed, a signatory of the majority report, which found favourably about spiritualism. It is intended primarily for students of the Liberal Evangelical Movement. Everyone interested in the Christian religion should read it. It ought to become one of the best sellers of our time. It is written by a man of learning with deep religious convictions, who has himself been impressed by the weight of the evidence for survival. Some of the statements of fact in it, as well as some of the opinions expressed, are open to criticism but taken as a whole it is the most impartial and knowledgeable review of the case which has yet appeared from a dignitary, if a minor dignitary, of the church. I say again to everyone—"Read it"—B.A.C.

RASPUTIN SPEAKS.

By George Sava. (Faber & Faber, 8/6 net)

This is a novel in which Rasputin is supposed to speak through a French medium called Muka. The first half of the book is the story of his life, as told by himself. It justifies all he did—even his open debauchery. The second part is a prophecy of the future in which Russia is to dominate the world.

The story of Rasputin's life is well told, though some of the more disgusting details might have been omitted, but there is nothing in the book to attract the attention of anyone merely interested in the occult or psychical research.

B.A.C.

FROM A PARSON'S PSYCHIC NOTEBOOK

By MRS. HEWAT MCKENZIE

[In PSYCHIC SCIENCE (July, 1939), I recorded some experiences taken from careful records, made at the time of the occurrences, by the Rev. D. G. Truss, a Congregational minister, during the course of a long life which had given him wide and varied contacts with his fellow-men. I have selected others from the same MS for this article. They are worthy of record as they were met with in the ordinary ways of life and often among Mr. Truss's own parishioners, indicating how widespread psychic happenings are to those who have ears to hear.]

TABLE TURNING

In one house occupied by a very respectable family named D., of whose antecedents I knew nothing, I had some interesting table sittings. The table seemed to tilt up and striking the floor with one foot spelt out remarkable messages. One evening the table was asked to spell out the name of the intelligence then operating and the name John M. was quickly spelt. It transpired he had died in that house and on asking which room (there were many and numbered) he gave No. 5. Also that he died in 1869 on the 13th of July. I turned to Mrs. D. who was sitting by the fire, taking no share in the sittings, and said, "I thought you said that this house had been in the possession of your family for many years." I was misled by the surname M. "Well, so it has," she replied. "But your name is not M." "It was before I married. John M. was my father and all you've heard through the table is true. He did die in No. 5 room, and if you go up to the churchyard you can verify all the dates." Needless to say I did and found them correct.

In another home at another table experiment during a social function a party sat down in a corner of the drawing-room with their hands placed lightly on a heavy lady's work-table with tripod legs. In a little the table became so violent in its movements that two lady sitters became nervous and left their seats while I and my male companion continued our contact, not to break the connection, hoping that others might take the vacant places. Just then the daughter of the house sat down at the piano and began to play dance music. Instantly the table began to dance to the tune and pirouetted about

so vigorously that we had considerable difficulty in keeping our hands upon it. I asked the pianist to vary the tune, which she did, and the table adapted its step to the music, whether it was fast or slow, and stopped the instant the music did. Two other ladies joined us but there was so much noise it was impossible to get successful results. At length the table began to shuffle across the room to the door, the sitters rising to follow its movements. Somebody said jokingly, "It wants to leave the room," and opened the door. The table strutted across the hall, first on one foot and then on the other and finally came to a standstill in the back sitting-room where the sitting was resumed in quietness.

Several discarnate persons announced their presence by spelling out their names, including wife No. 1 of our good host, who with No. 2 was sitting at the table. When the full Christian name and surname came through, I felt embarrassed fearing lest my friend, confronted by his wifely rivals might find the situation awkward. I said, "Shall we proceed?" He stroked his chin for a moment and then said "Yes" hesitatingly, and the messages, quite harmonious, went on satisfactorily.

At another house a large circle sat round a heavy huge loo table and the power was remarkable. If we had had an experienced leader, which I was not at this stage, I am sure we would have had fine results. We sat in total darkness for physical phenomena on some occasions and fine spirit lights flitted about the room. Neither before nor since have I seen lights so large, luminous and lasting as those obtained at that circle. It was before the days of electric torches. On one occasion when even the keyhole had been stopped up to exclude any natural light, a sceptic next to me asked if I could see a light. I did not and he said it was behind me on my left. I turned and he said it disappeared as I moved. Then I saw one floating over the table, seen by all. It descended to the level of our faces and remained stationary. I rose quietly, and stretched my arm and forefinger across the table to touch it. My digit seemed to pass right through it and came in contact with a lady's forehead, startling her considerably. The light disappeared and all manifestations ceased for that night.

My ignorance of psychic matters probably prevented something interesting happening. The lights were about as large as a two-shilling piece, pear-shaped, the pointed end underneath, of a beautiful bluish colour and very steady.

Among my friends at this time was a very Evangelical man who regarded all psychic research as diabolical and dangerous. He told me the following story. Two sisters, well known to him, procured a planchette and soon succeeded in getting rapid and intelligible messages by its means. They agreed to ask at one sitting when their brother Jack would return from Switzerland where he was mountaineering. "A week to-morrow" was the reply. Highly improbable they thought, as he had only just gone and intended to remain some time. "Are you sure he will be home as early as to-morrow week?" they asked again. To their horror and amazement the planchette wrote "Yes, in his coffin." The unlooked-for reply proved to be prophetic for he had fallen into a crevasse while climbing and was brought home at the time and in the manner stated. "And," said my friend, "the sisters never touched that evil instrument of the devil again." But planchette had only truthfully answered their own inquiry.

KNOCKS AND RAPS

Jennie W., a girl member of Mr. Truss's congregation, was threatened with lung trouble, and because of her forlorn condition commanded deep sympathy from Mr. and Mrs. Truss. She stayed with them in the country and as she was under no delusions as to the end of her illness they often discussed together what the change would mean. She had to be removed to London and feeling the end could not be far off promised to appear to them if possible or to give them a token at the time of her passing. Mr. Truss heard of her occasionally through her brother and that she was in Brompton. One Sunday evening they were seated after supper chatting with a well-known Bristol clergyman who had been their guest for the week-end. Suddenly they were startled almost out of their seats by three loud percussive raps which seemed to come from the glass-panelled door of the room. Front and back doors were locked, the children were in bed and the maid at the top of the house asleep;

there was no animal in the house. Yet three persons heard those knocks on the door of the room, knocks which made the glass rattle in the panels as though the door had been struck by a hammer or a heavy stick. Mr. Truss noted the time, 10.18 p.m. The following Tuesday morning brought a letter from Jennie's brother, saying that a few minutes after 10 p.m. on the previous Sunday his sister had a sudden attack and died almost immediately. "The poor lass," says Mr. Truss, "notwithstanding her sudden call, had kept her promise, or so it seemed to us."

During an epidemic Mr. Truss lost three young children with great resulting sorrow to the hearts of their parents. He had heard of others receiving comfort through messages by means of planchette and often tried himself but could get nothing by this means. One night while he sat with the board getting no movement, three sharp, loud raps came, it seemed to him, on the face of the small clock which stood on the low mantelpiece near him. They were followed by a succession of gentle taps on the drawer of a chest in the room in which the toys and tiny garments of the lost children were carefully put away. The signals evidently given with intention, comforted though they did not satisfy. On another occasion, again when sitting with planchette, three tremendous raps startled him. They issued apparently from under the floor immediately beneath his feet, and were so violent and vibrant that they jarred his feet and legs unpleasantly. He tried to reproduce them but could only get dull thuds; there seemed nothing normal to cause the noise. He often wished in those days that he had someone who could have advised him as to development, as there was undoubted psychic power in the family.

A FULFILLED DREAM

He had to preach twice before a congregation in Bristol and was then chosen as pastor, but on neither of the occasions was one of the leading members able to be present because of illness. He came into residence and learned that, just prior to this, this man had had a remarkable dream to the effect that his baby girl, then in good health, sickened and died, and was buried in a particular cemetery in the city at a

particular spot on a ridge. In his dream he noted that the burial service was taken by a clergyman whom he had never seen before and felt he would recognize should he meet him. He also saw the ground was covered with snow. On the first Sunday of Mr. Truss taking up the pastorate he was in church and watching the vestry door for the new minister's appearance. His heart, in his own words, "gave a great lurch" for in Mr. Truss he saw the man of his dream. They became good friends. Not long after the dream was fulfilled in every particular. The little girl died and was buried in the cemetery and at the spot seen, without any premeditated action by the father. Snow fell on the previous day, the ground was white, and the officiating clergyman was Mr. Truss.

While ministering to the same congregation, Mr. Truss had an experience which he thinks was more than coincidence. One Sunday afternoon he found great and rather unusual difficulty in choosing a sermon for the evening service and rejected several. Then on handling one manuscript something seemed to say, "Take this one." He did so. The text was, "The Master is come and calleth for thee." During the sermon a maiden lady, a member of the church, felt ill and went out. Receiving some attention from the caretaker she remarked, "I'm Mary, and the Master is come and calleth for me and I'm going." She died a few days later and Mr. Truss buried her the following Sunday.

THE LIMITS OF THE SUBCONSCIOUS

By B. ABDY COLLINS

[The first part of this article was published in *Light* (April 27, 1939) and was afterwards expanded for a lecture delivered at the Institute in the same year. The importance of the subject seems to justify the printing of the lecture with some additions.]

All those interested in psychical research know that many cases occur in which there appears only one alternative to the conclusion that a message has been received from, or a conversation held with, some deceased person and that is that the information has somehow been obtained through the wonderful powers of the medium's subconscious mind to which it is considered legitimate to assume that there are no limits.

If it were possible to convince the world of philosophy and science that there are definite limits to the powers of the subconscious mind or even that certain limits were very probable, it is hardly too much to say that many who have so far been sceptics would be compelled to modify their views. It is strange therefore that Professor Bozzano's attempt in the second chapter of his book *Discarnate Influence in Human Life* to establish such limits has attracted so little attention.

He starts by pointing out that those who maintain that survival is doubtful or improbable assert that no limits can be assigned to the inquisitorial powers of the supernormal faculties and it is considered theoretically correct to attribute more and more latitude to these faculties in proportion as new cases difficult of explanation are continually occurring. "These amplifications have now reached such a pitch of exaggeration as to confer on the human subconscious the divine attribute of omniscience."

It is unnecessary to follow Prof. Bozzano through all his discussions. He begins by arguing from the analogy of wireless that "if it be true that the human subconscious seizes and registers the psychic vibrations of thoughts of absent persons, then such a reception should be restricted to persons in affinity, through affection or some other cause, with the receiving subconscious." Mediums therefore can obtain

information from the subconscious of absent persons only on condition that one of the three conditions are satisfied: (1) the medium is acquainted with the absent person; (2) failing this, the sitter is acquainted with him, or (3) an object somehow connected with the absent person or much used by that person is handed to the medium (psychometry).

These conclusions seem not improbable, but one cannot base any firm conclusions on an analogy of this sort. The facts of psychometry do, however, seem to support the idea that it is necessary somehow to get into *rapport* by however slender a link with anyone from whose mind it is desired to get information. At the least one can say that by psychometrical methods it is possible to obtain information in what appears a miraculous manner and if no "object" is available a person in affinity seems sometimes to act equally well. Later on we shall see that an examination of cases of this kind, where we are in a position to know the facts, tend to support these ideas.

In the rest of the chapter Prof. Bozzano lays down three further propositions (1) that the medium or sensitive cannot actually select information from the mind of a third person, but can only passively receive and interpret thought vibrations; (2) that such information as can be obtained must still exist vividly on the threshold of that person's consciousness, and (3) that the information received can never concern third persons known to the absent individual but only strictly personal details concerning the individual himself.

If these conditions could be considered to be established without doubt, psychical research would be greatly simplified and the attitude of the psychologists and philosophers would soon be modified. Unfortunately, Prof. Bozzano, for lack of space, does not present any proofs of these statements in his book, but claims to have established them in a monograph which has not been translated either into French or into English and so is not accessible to me. However, he points out that if many cases in which information about deceased persons is given are to be "explained," the subconscious must possess a prodigious power of selecting the most insignificant information about those persons from the minds of absent individuals. To posit these powers some kind of

evidence is necessary but none exists nor is there any experimental work, which would even vaguely suggest such a possibility.

As Prof. Bozzano's own evidence is not available, it will be interesting to examine the psychic literature of this country and America. If one is to get any idea of the extent of the powers of the subconscious mind as opposed to vague surmise, it must be, I think, from a study of its activities under hypnosis, by analysis of the cases of messages received through mediums from persons still living, or conversations held with them in the same way or by examining cases of clairvoyance or psychometry directed towards living persons. In such cases we may presume that the supernatural powers take the line of least resistance and somehow acquire knowledge not available to those present from or at least through the person concerned.

Under hypnosis one might deduce that the conscious mind is lulled to sleep, while the subconscious is awakened and takes charge. In the recorded cases of hypnosis the subject sometimes employs wonderful powers. He can read the contents of sealed envelopes, describe distant scenes which he has never seen and say what persons to whom his attention is directed are doing in those places. Generally speaking I find these to be the limits of the powers displayed under hypnosis, but the case of Mme Morel will be noticed later.

I have taken great interest in communications from living persons and do not know of any on record which would give any basis for endowing the subconscious of the sensitive recipient with a power to select from the agent's mind information latent in it concerning a third person which did not strictly concern him. By this I mean something that, as it were, formed part of his life's history and in some way influenced it rather than a mere item in some one else's life of which he was cognisant or had been a witness. The most striking instances of communications of this kind are the many experiences of W. T. Stead recorded in his lecture before the London Spiritualist Alliance in 1893 (see *Light*, 1893, pp. 135-136). These were investigated by Myers and several of them given at length in the *Progs. of the S.P.R.*, Vol. IX (page 53). Mr. Stead used to sit down, take pencil and paper and direct his thoughts towards the person from

whom he wished to get information, and then and there his hand wrote a letter to him from that person. In other cases "conversations" have been held with living individuals (without their conscious knowledge) through mediums, e.g., the case of Gordon Davis (*S.P.R. Progs.*, Vol. XXXV, p. 560), and the conversation held by Mr. Bligh Bond through Margery Crandon with a friend (Mr. "Flower") in England. In these cases it appears that it is the so-called recipient who really plays the active part either direct or through the medium and all the information received is something directly concerning the "agent" and either in his immediate consciousness or occupying his thoughts near the time. The case of Gordon Davis is somewhat peculiar because the information received by Mr. Soal concerning him referred to his *future* which was quite unknown to his conscious self or to anybody else. But about this more later. So there is nothing in all these cases to warrant the supposition that the recipient's or the medium's subconscious can get any information from a distant person which does not directly concern him.

I have left to the last those cases which are most favourable to the theory that the subconscious has unlimited powers, those in which the medium either in some sort of trance, or in one case at least in a hypnotic state, has his attention drawn towards a distant person either by handling or seeing an object once associated with him or by the presence of a person who has affinity for him, or at least knows something about him and is directing his thoughts towards him. It happens that some of the best work done in this direction—I might even say some of the best work ever done in psychical research—has been carried out and published by the late Dr. Osty, whose book has been translated into English by Stanley de Brath under the title "*Supernormal Faculties in Man.*" It is astonishing how relatively little attention this book has attracted in this country, where nothing at all comparable with it has been put forward.

Dr. Osty was fortunate in having at his service four outstanding mediums with whom he carried out most of his experiments, Mme Morel, Mme Peyroutet, Mlle. de Berley and M. de Fleuriere. These, as he says, were "endowed with the permanent faculty (when put in contact with other

individuals) of taking paranormal cognition of their personalities and the content of their lives." His records were kept in the fullest manner and he refused to countenance the spiritist hypothesis. If in dealing with the lives of deceased persons his medium appeared to himself to see the deceased before him and hear him speaking, he ascribed it always to hallucination and did his best to wean them from this "habit." If therefore there is no mention of these things in any record, it does not follow that the case was "free" from it. Actually most of his work was carried out by experiments regarding *living* persons and it is to these our attention will be turned.

Dr. Osty worked largely through psychometry, but his experiments were sometimes directed to seeing what was the slightest link necessary to enable the psychic to get into touch with the desired distant person. He gives details of several cases in which the mere presence of a letter on the table was sufficient to provoke full descriptions of the life past, present and future of a distant person unknown to the sitter or the medium, but I will select one in which an even slighter link sufficed. Dr. Osty says "On May 12th (1922) pen in hand, I put Mme de Peyroutet the single question 'Please give me the outline of the life of the person of whom I am thinking.' I had met Mme F. for a few moments at the house of mutual friends. I know vaguely that she had recently made an unexpected marriage and her past life was characterised by events which if revealed by metagnomy (the word used by him to denote supernormal acquisition of knowledge) would exclude any possibility of mere coincidence."

Mme Peyroutet then gave a full description of the appearance and character of Mme F. and also details of her life of which a few are extracted. "Her past has been cloudy, there are in it things that are not clear. . . . I think she was illegitimate, there was some secret about her birth . . . some personage is concerned, could he have been her father? . . . There is a widow . . . her mother was a widow when her daughter was born. . . . She was a light woman . . . had lovers . . . is still coquettish and does not trouble to see her daughter."

"The poor child lived away from her mother. What

changes and travels. I see her with a wicked woman. She must have gone abroad when quite young. There is a woman near her who has been in prison . . . thefts and imprisonment—what surroundings! She has been beaten and roughly treated. . . No worse people could be found than those among whom she grew up. . . Happily the child has an honest nature. . . . Her mother came back to her. They wrote to each other and met about her marriage. . . . The young woman is married now and very happy. Her husband is good and clever. . . . He seems to be a chief over others . . . he wears a uniform and is much at sea . . . has travelled much and will travel more."

Subsequently Dr. Osty received the following information from her friends. Mme F. was born in Paris at the house of a midwife, where her mother more than a year widowed, gave birth to her secretly. The identity of her father is unknown except to the mother, who is still living. On recovery the mother resumed her life in society, leaving her child with the midwife on annual payments. The child was four years old when the daughter of the midwife took her away to live with her in Turkey—a bad woman and bad surroundings. Towards her tenth year, the girl passed into the hands of another person who took her to England. This woman taught her to steal, got all she could get out of her and used to beat her when the child resisted.

When in her thirteenth year she returned to France, the mother confided her to a woman comparatively better than the others. Having grown into a beautiful girl, she became a nurse during the war; she attracted the notice of a naval officer in hospital, who married her and was told of her past. The mother saw the daughter on the occasion of her marriage.

It will be seen that the delineation, as Dr. Osty calls it, was strikingly successful. The condition of success was a link, however slender—the sitters' knowledge of her existence and one or two details of her life, and his having once seen her—which brought about *rapport* with her. We are chiefly concerned with the character of the information obtained. All of it strictly concerned the person from whose mind it seems to have been obtained. If it had been obtained from other peoples' minds, presumably we should have learnt

more about the identity of her father, which was known to the mother. *The lives of other people are only described in so far as they affected hers* and all the details given were probably known to her either directly or from hearsay. The facts given, however, can hardly have all or for the most part been at the time vividly on the threshold of her consciousness.

Let us look more briefly at another striking case. It is that of a Mrs. M. who visited Mlle. de Berly. Mrs. M. had been vainly looking for a flat in Paris. The medium at once told her she would get the flat she wanted. The people who owned it would have a sudden stroke of luck; they would be offered a brilliant situation overseas and go leaving the flat which she would get. All this came true. In this case there was no present link with the absent persons. They come into the picture because they affected her life in the future. This foretelling of the future accurately is a very striking feature and I will mention it later. Here I will only point out that this information about a third party does not seem to have been got direct from the mind of a distant person, but through the sitter herself, who acted as a link because their lives were to converge in the future.

I have examined all the cases published in this absorbing book and cannot find one in which information could be said to have been obtained from the mind of an absent person which did not strictly concern the life of that person. In the delineation of the lives of such distant persons, other parties are only mentioned and described as it were as incidental parts of those lives. In other words information is only obtained *from and concerning* persons with whom the medium has formed some direct link, however slender.

One of Dr. Osty's mediums, Mme Morel, did not go into trance by herself but was hypnotised by direct gaze. She often gave information about deceased persons, but only by psychometry, that is after "contact" with some object belonging to or associated with the deceased—not with an object belonging to a *third* person still living who knew details about the deceased. This in view of the results of psychometry in respect of still living persons seems to indicate that she did *not* get the information regarding deceased persons

from the minds of the living. In fact, in some cases, e.g., the well-known Lerasle case (page 108), it was not known to any living person. Dr. Osty does indeed say that "human individuals connected with the lives of the persons who have touched the object may also, though more rarely, be cognised." But he gives no example which goes beyond the limits described above and so it is not clear exactly what he means by this and it is doubtful if he means more than what has been suggested above. He adds that with Mme Morel the objects that stimulate best are those with which contact (i.e., with the person whose life is delineated) has been frequent and prolonged.

Dr. Osty's book was published in 1922. Four years later in the *Revue Metapsychique* (1926, pp. 14-15), he says "we are the victims of an illusion if arguing from appearances we presume that the sensitive extracts information from a latent mentality. The observer loses this illusion as soon as he seeks by experiment for the explanation of how the phenomenon takes place . . . It is . . . by a sort of real and subconscious conversation that the mental couple elaborate such abnormal knowledge."

I shall not discuss as a separate phenomenon those cases in which information is obtained about the *future* of distant persons, for the reason that we are mainly interested in what is obtained regarding the past and present lives of living persons, since we are in reality seeking for an explanation of the way information is received about deceased persons and deceased persons have no future in this world. If we are to draw any conclusion from the fact that these delineations include the future, it might be that the medium does obtain her information from the distant persons subconscious, which has been found on occasions to be aware of its owner's future. In any case we still find that the only information obtained about third parties is something which directly concerns the person delineated.

To sum up, while an examination of these cases does not seem to warrant the acceptance of Prof. Bozzano's three propositions as they stand, we find that

(1) that in all known cases in which it seems if not the certain at least far the most probable explanation (as opposed

to mere surmise) that a sensitive has somehow obtained information from a third party (still living) at a distance, there is some *rapport* or link between himself or his sitter and that person; and

(2) that information can only be obtained which directly concerns the life of the third party.

In particular, as pointed out above, positive evidence to support these conclusions may be found from psychometry. When we consider the numerous cases of supernormal acquisition of knowledge about the past and present lives of the living which are on record and see that these limitations appear to govern them without exception, we are forced to the conclusion that the assumption that these powers extend far beyond these limits cannot be justified. At the lowest it may be said that there is good reason to suppose that there are some limits to the powers of the subconscious and to proceed as if it might be omniscient and that there are no barriers to its inquiries is contrary to experience. Even so much would be a definite advance in psychical research.

At any rate, here it is suggested is a fruitful field for experiment and analysis. No one person, least of all the writer, can pretend to have examined all existing cases on record of the supernormal acquisition of knowledge about absent individuals. It may be that there are cases which would require the withdrawal or modification of one or other or both of these conclusions. If so, let them be produced. All that is asked is that those engaged in psychical research should give up their present practice of throwing out vague surmises about the extent of these powers and instead use what data there are or can be obtained to define or delimit them.

I have little hope that these suggestions will have any effect on those who take pleasure in thinking out what they call "theoretically possible" explanations of supernormal facts. A good example of what I mean will be found in Mr. H. F. Saltmarsh's paper "Is Proof of Survival Possible?" published in *Proceedings of the S.P.R.*, Vol. XL. The paper contains more than one "argument," of which I will cite the following: Mr. Saltmarsh points out that we must always bear in mind "the possibility of the information having been

conveyed telepathically by the deceased prior to his death to some other person, possibly the sitter, in whose subconscious mind it has been latent until drawn there from by the medium. Though this person were subconsciously aware of the facts, knowledge of them would never arise into his normal consciousness." I am not sure who was the inventor of this idea, for it is not, I think, original, but it is, of course, a mere figment of the imagination devoid of any basis, experimental or otherwise. It reminds me of those exercises in dialectics which the professors of legal pleading in Athens encouraged their pupils to undertake, that eventually brought the fine flower of Greek oratory into disrepute. It is simply a piece of mental gymnastics and nothing else.

However, Mr. Saltmarsh is not content with his theory as it stands, but suggests its application to a concrete case. "In such cases as that known as the Chaffin Will case," he adds "this alternative must be borne in mind." This suggestion could hardly commend itself to anyone familiar with the details of this case. Very briefly (the full facts are on record in Vol. XXXVI of the *S.P.R. Progs.*) James Chaffin unknown to anyone made a second holograph will (which in S. Carolina State, where he resided, was valid without witnesses) in 1919. In 1921 he died suddenly as the result of a fall without regaining consciousness, and a previous will made in 1905 was produced and proved. *Four years later* in 1925, his second son began to have dreams or visions of his father and finally he appeared at his bed side dressed in an old black overcoat that he used to wear, pulled it open and said: "You will find my will in my overcoat pocket." The will was *not* found in the overcoat pocket but directions to look in the old family bible (where it was found) were discovered sewn up in the old coat's lining. All these facts were proved and acted on in a court of law.

Of course, there was no medium to "draw" the information from someone's mind in this case, but I suppose this is what Mr. Saltmarsh suggests happened:

(1) that the father *without knowing it* "telepathically" impressed the knowledge about his will on his son's subconscious mind without the latter being consciously aware of it;

(2) that the knowledge about his father's will remained latent in his subconscious mind for four years at least or probably six ;

(3) that the information thus sent was incorrect or incorrectly apprehended but led by a fortunate coincidence to the finding of the will.

There are other circumstances about this case which render the "theory" unlikely but these three, I submit, make it little short of ridiculous, even from what is called a "theoretical" point of view. When we come to compare these suggested powers of the subconscious with what we know of its action in those cases in which it can be followed out and checked to some extent, as described above, it is obviously devoid of any logical basis. In all these cases the medium clearly obtains his knowledge from the absent person at the moment at which he gives it out. So far as I know there are no *experimental* cases on record which show any tendency to latency of telepathic impressions in the subconscious. The carrying out of orders by hypnotised subjects hours or even two or three days after is something quite different and at any rate the periods are quite short. So the experience gained from such experiments is against the theory. There have been *spontaneous* cases in which a person has witnessed clairvoyantly an accident at a distance a few hours after the event (see page 33, Vol. VII *S.P.R. Progs.* but here again the period is very short.

There is good experimental evidence (see *Human Personality*, abridged edition, page 133) that an agent at a distance can both bring on hypnotic trance and by will power influence the subject to action but (1) conscious willing is necessary, and (2) there is no latency.

Altogether this is a good example of the application of theories of this whimsical nature without any basis of fact. Why should this kind of work be encouraged in psychical research? If those engaged in research on the powers and methods of mediums would follow Dr. Osty's practice and carefully record and analyse the results of directing their attention *to living persons*, they would really learn something about the powers of the subconscious and would cease to suggest that it is omniscient.

NOTES BY THE WAY

Activities at the Institute during April and May showed very little change. An attempt was made to include more lectures in our programme, but these were not well attended; they hardly paid expenses.

Miss Phillimore, Secretary to the L.S.A., spoke on "Mediumship from the Sitter's Standpoint." Mr. A. Jackman, Secretary to the World Congress of Faiths, gave a short and interesting talk on the "Power of Thought." "Brother Peter," the control of Mr. Harold Sharp, gave a series of talks on "Precious Stones," "Trees," and "Herbs."

The attendance at these talks was much affected by war conditions in London, and the attendance fell off considerably towards the end. They were good lectures and merited a better audience.

* * *

Classes for training students and the further training of mediums are very well attended and repay all the trouble and time spent in this work, which appears to be much appreciated. Many of the students show exceptional promise.

* * *

We regret to record the deaths of Mr. Frank Brittain, husband of Mrs. Annie Brittain, and of Mr. Intyd B. Nicholl an old and valued member.

* * *

The following donations have been received and are gratefully acknowledged:

Mrs. McKenzie	£5	5	0
Anon: Psychic Science		5	0

BOOK REVIEWS

EXPLORING THE ULTRA-PERCEPTIVE FACULTY

By J. Hettinger, Ph.D. (London: Rider & Co.)

In this interesting little book Dr. Hettinger describes a new method which may prove to be of great value in the investigation of Extra-Sensory Perception. Hitherto, the handling by a sensitive of objects belonging to a distant person, has been resorted to as an aid to a delineation by the sensitive of the personality and life-history of the owner of the "psychometrised" article. The late Dr. Osty frequently made use of such "rapport" objects for this purpose, and readers will recall how the handling by a sensitive of a scarf that had belonged to a missing man led to the discovery of his dead body in the forest. Dr. Hettinger's experiments seem to show that such "rapport" objects may be employed equally well to enable the medium to contact the present mental activities of the distant person.

His method is briefly as follows. The experimenter (Dr. Hettinger) and the distant agent (called the "subject") synchronise their watches, and it is agreed that the "subject" shall, at a pre-arranged time, commence to peruse in order the contents of any illustrated paper, annotating each picture or paragraph with the time (taken to the nearest minute) at which the picture or paragraph was first seen by the reader. In the meantime, Dr. Hettinger, who is with the sensitive many miles away, records minute by minute a long series of statements by the latter with the appropriate times. It should be pointed out that the sensitive (Mrs. K. or Miss F.) is not told the nature of the experiment, but is given some object in a sealed envelope belonging to the distant subject. She then proceeds to dictate her impressions, the recital lasting perhaps for an hour, and the number of items given amounting to as many as a hundred. These items are then compared with the contemporaneous pictures and paragraphs read by the "subject" in the illustrated magazine. In most of the examples cited by Dr. Hettinger the time-lag between the perusal of the picture and the appropriate item given by the sensitive is less than a minute.

A study of the copious illustrations and reproductions given in the book shows that the degree of correspondence between the sensitive's statements and the picture visualised by the "subject" is often very striking indeed. To take, for example, the first illustration in the text, the sensitive (Miss F.) remarked, "Someone interested in *dairy work*." At that same moment the distant subject, Mr. S. F. Thurlow of King's College, was looking at a picture in the *Daily Sketch* of a carton on the top of which was printed in thick type the words "DAIRY BOX."

In a number of cases it would seem as though the sensitive was unable to grasp the meaning of the picture as a whole, but succeeded in abstracting from it one or more items. Thus on p. 55 the picture in *Everybody's* shows a motor-car smashing into a lamp-post with broken glass scattered on the ground, whereas all the sensitive perceived was "*Some broken glass*."

As a consequence of this inability to cognise the picture as a whole, curious but striking misinterpretation of detail often occurs. On p. 74 there appears an illustration taken from *Lilliput* entitled "Notre Dame in Rain." If the picture is held upside down the reflections of the pinnacles show a striking resemblance to a number of wax candles, and in fact what the sensitive obtained was "*Something about wax and wax candles.*"

Sometimes the picture visualised suggested to the sensitive an appropriate auditory or colour sensation. For instance, a series of illustrations of film actresses extending over two pages and coloured all in *blue* caused the sensitive to see a "*huge bunch of bluebells,*" and the picture of a door demolished by a bombardment during the Spanish war gave rise to an auditory illusion of "*A door noisily banged and disturbing.*"

In certain of the experiments each of the sensitives, Mrs. K. and Miss F., living miles apart, was given a "rapport" object belonging to the other, both being unaware of this. They recorded their impressions simultaneously and in a few cases it was found that though a pair of contemporaneous items given by the sensitives were not found to have any application to the picture that was being looked at by the subject yet the two items resembled each other in a striking way. Thus Mrs. K. records: "I hear a noise like a *heavy chain* being dragged along," while at the same moment Miss F. remarks: "A large *heavy chain.*" The impression, however, was not applicable to the picture studied by the subject and is possibly an example of what M. Warcollier has called "Mental Contagion."

Dr. Hettinger, unfortunately, did not plan these particular experiments on a statistical basis as he might have done by employing methods similar to those adopted by Mr. Whately Carington in his recent paper, *Experiments on the Paranormal Cognition of Drawings* (S.P.R. *Proceedings*, Part 162, Vol. XLVI, June, 1940). A certain unknown proportion of his illustrations may therefore be the result of chance coincidence, and unless we know definitely which cases of resemblance are fortuitous and which are not, it is rather unsafe to theorise as Dr. Hettinger does about the interpretations to be attached to individual examples. That *all* Dr. Hettinger's examples are the work of chance coincidence is, I think, very improbable in view of the striking character of the resemblances themselves. It is a pity that Dr. Hettinger does not in a single instance give a complete list of the hundred odd statements made by the sensitive at a sitting. Such a complete record in even a few cases would materially assist the student in tracing out the associations followed by the mind of the medium.

Perhaps the most serious criticism that may be levelled against Dr. Hettinger's work is: that, from an *evidential* standpoint, it nowhere approaches the standard required by the Society for Psychical Research for its publications.

We are not told, for instance, the precise manner in which the checking-up was carried out. In a properly controlled experiment a record of the sensitive's statements would have been taken by a shorthand writer

and a copy posted *immediately* to an independent authority, a duplicate being retained by Dr. Hettinger. Or, better still, a witness could have taken away with him a copy of the sensitive's statements. Whether Dr. Hettinger actually took these or similar precautions I do not know, but I can find no record of them in his book. Psychical research may one day reach a stage when the presence of corroborating witnesses may be superfluous, but most serious students feel that such a day is still far off. It is of course quite open for Dr. Hettinger to argue that anyone can obtain independent confirmation by repeating these experiments with his two sensitives, Mrs. K. and Miss F. It is to be hoped that opportunities for such controlled repetition may be afforded by the three persons concerned. In conclusion all students will be grateful to Dr. Hettinger for putting on record such an interesting piece of work.

S. G. SOAL.

GREAT PROPHECIES ABOUT THE WAR

By Clarence Reed. (Faber & Faber, 2/6)

This little book of 64 pages is mainly concerned with five prophecies all of which are claimed to have some bearing on the present war. Their meaning and chronology are often a matter of "interpretation." but then that might be said of most prophecies, which if true are usually not clear till after the event. Prophets, too, for the most part fall down when they attempt dates. Mother Shipton, whose other forecasts were amazingly accurate, ends her doggerel as follows :

England shall at last admit a foe.
The world to an end shall come
In eighteen hundred and eighty one.

Mr. Reed comforts his readers by suggesting that as this last prophecy was wrong, the one above it—the only one not yet fulfilled or falsified—may be a mistake too.

Mr. Reed discusses five major prophecies, to each of which he devotes a chapter—the Polish prophecy, the prophecy of St. Odille, the Pyramid prophecies, Tolstoy's prophecy and that of Nostrodamus.

The Polish Prophecy is interesting to our readers as the only one which was made through a medium at a spiritualistic seance. It dates from 1893 and was deposited in a library at Lwow at the time. The war of 1914-18 was foretold for 1913 with some detail. The resuscitation of Poland is predicted to occur 30 years later and the defeat of Germany and Russia is clearly indicated.

The ancient prophecy of St. Odille, said to date from the seventh century or thereabouts, is of uncertain parentage, but was published in Paris in 1916. It foretells the career of a conqueror starting from the banks of the Danube (Hitler ?) and his victories on land and sea and in the air. The sixth month of the second year of the war is to be his zenith and the second part of the war, the period of decline, is to be equal in length to half the first. This fixes December, 1941, as the prelude to the end. A revolt among the women of his own country is foretold and that the Crescent and the Cross will be united. The

third period, in which the conqueror's land is to be invaded and his troops decimated by a strange disease, is to be the shortest.

The Pyramid Prophecies are so well known that they need no remark. Tolstoy's were made in 1910 a few months before his death. They have some interesting features and include one about the formation of the United States of Nations, of which there are to be four great groups only, the Anglo-Saxons, the Latins, the Slavs and the Mongolians but his timing is already wrong.

Nostrodamus is described as the man who is never wrong. This is partly due to his frequent obscurity, which admits of more than one interpretation. Still he made some allusions which correspond with present circumstances, e.g., "In Germany shall be born divers sects strongly resembling paganism." Again "Because of Germans and neighbouring nations men will be at war in the clouds." But too much interpretation is required to carry conviction.

However, the whole book is interesting and well worth half a crown.

B.A.C.

HEAVEN LIES WITHIN US

By Theos. Bernard. (Rider & Co., 15/-.)

In India, and in Asiatic lands affected by Indian thought, those aspects of man's spiritual life which in Occidental lands are called Mysticism and Occultism are known as Raja Yoga and Hatha Yoga respectively. This book, by the author of *Land of a Thousand Buddhas*, deals for the most part with Hatha Yoga, though Mr. Bernard admits that "Raja Yoga . . . is the ultimate form of all Yoga" (p. 58). Motive must count for more in Occultism than in Mysticism, or, let us agree to call them, Hatha Yoga and Raja Yoga: for the simple reason, that by the very nature of Mysticism you cannot advance at all, unless the highest unselfishness and the most complete surrender of the man to his God are first accomplished. But in Hatha Yoga it would seem you can go a very long way (possibly with ultimate danger to your own soul) while your main if subtly concealed motive is the desire of Power. So, when we are told about "renouncing all fruits of action, working for the joy of accomplishment" (p. 60) to the wholehearted exponent of Raja Yoga, "the joy of accomplishment" is itself a working for fruit; and in many cases, men may be tempted to think they have abandoned "fruits of action" while actually deceiving themselves. Is it possible to believe that one could go through all the elaborate and difficult postures and bodily exercises, devoting, as the author claims to have done, hours of time to what, after all, only seems to be a peculiar system of Indian physical culture, plus an Indian form of what we know as Pelmanism, without concentrating far too much on the body and one's own ego? Yet, on pages 61 and 62, Mr. Bernard becomes wholly Raja Yogic, showing, quite truly, that according to the Master of Yoga—Patanjali—the work to be done is of the consciousness rather than of the physical frame.

What Mr. Bernard has to say of himself justifies his being enthusiastic about Hatha Yoga practices; he received through them an abounding

sense of health and joy of living, which, seeing he had experienced ill-health previously, must have appeared to him as almost miraculous. But physical culture and nudism can lay claim to equal enthusiasm from men and women who have passed from states of chronic ill-being into assured vitality and health, and this without an unfortunate confusion between the physical culture or nudism and the greatest essay of the soul towards spirituality. As one who has practised Raja Yoga, the reviewer feels impelled to refer to an "unfortunate confusion."

On p. 66, the author speaks of "conserved sex energy," and while some of the teaching about sex is good (it should be noted that the whole book seems written from the male standpoint) the rest of it is open to grave doubt. And to speak frankly—the book does that—the excretory organs get more attention than they should have in a work purporting to deal with spiritual achievement. Straightforwardly, I think the Freudians would have a word for it. To be told that as the result of a certain practice, you "will be able to keep the anus contracted during coition" (p. 213) may be interesting, but it is certainly not likely to lead to lofty spiritual attainment.

Chapters VIII and IX are from the standpoint of a student of Raja Yoga, the best chapters in the book. One feels one would like, with an occasional amendment that might become necessary, to publish them as a separate pamphlet. Chapter XVI may be cited as the one most likely to arouse irresistible feelings of ridicule in the mind of the most seriously inclined. Standing on one's head (instead of talking out of one's hat, as Westerners do) is alleged to have the most marvellous effects, and on page 231, we have this gem: "If the student desires to discover the unsteady state of the mind in which he is living, there is no better way than to stand on the head and observe what takes place. You will be amazed. Try it and see."

Yet the book is extraordinarily fascinating in a queer way, vivid and fresh, and much of it—*not all*—sounds like a first hand experience, as the author claims it to be. And since the word Yoga, as Mr. Bernard points out, has many meanings, one approaching what in English we call genius, it is hard to refuse the title of Yoga to what is an exacting, possibly dangerous (though the author advises great care) and certainly an efficacious system of bodily purification and development, plus mental culture. But in the sense we use Yoga in Raja Yoga, in the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads generally, this is not the Pure Yoga that leads to the same goal as the Path of Western Mysticism; the Path of Purification, Illumination and Union; the Beatific Vision, wherein the soul can say with Jesus: "I and My Father are one"; or with Paul: "I live, yet not I; Christ liveth in me."—E. V. HAYES

YOU CAN SPEAK WITH YOUR DEAD

By Shaw Desmond. (Methuen & Co., 3/6 net.)

In this book, a tract for the times, Shaw Desmond covers, rather scantily, various aspects of psychic knowledge which he feels must be incorporated in science and religion if man is to be helped to face

the problems of to-day and the new world which will be upon us when hostilities cease. He refers to the testimony of those scientists in all lands, though few their names are weighty, who have not feared to assert that in psychic knowledge man may become aware of new ranges of consciousness from which power can be drawn. As Prof. Price has said in his Presidential Address to the S.P.R., science may be judged in the future by the timidity of its hypotheses in these matters. Shaw Desmond does not err in this way. He is a convinced Spiritualist and draws from his own experience much of the evidence which he presents and refers readers to various works by himself and others for further study.

He discusses the difficulties of human mediumship—there is no other way known to us at present by which knowledge of the after-life can be secured—and believes that one day “a mechanical instrument” which will register with perfect accuracy may be found. That is a fond hope of the future and meanwhile all our energies should be bent on making the training and conditions under which mediums operate more perfect. In a chapter on “How to be your own medium,” the author offers some advice. With much of it I can agree, but would most strongly disagree that potential sensitives should sit in darkness with their group. *Never*, until the mediumship and its proper guards are well established.

Shaw Desmond's views on the after-life must be regarded as the conclusions he has reached personally through mediumistic communications to himself and other records. He is not dogmatic about these, and on such questions as Re-incarnation and on “Love and Marriage beyond Death,” many will hold different views. The etheric body which embodies the surviving spirit may have the potentialities of all the organs which were used in the earthly body, but in its new sphere other uses will be subserved by these. The other world is, as he says, a world of creative thought with opportunities for progressive growth of which we know but little, growth through a union with other souls, at which he hints, which will develop personality in a way we cannot fathom while in the flesh. It is the hope of this which makes his vision of the future worth while, that by the glimpse we have gained of a more perfect community “over there” we may be able to translate something of it into our common life here.

I am sorry that on several pages Shaw Desmond refers to himself as the Founder of the International Institute for Psychical Research (now the International Institute for Psychic Investigation at Walton House). He was a Co-Founder with the late Mrs. Dawson Scott and Mr. J. Arthur Findlay, and this should not be forgotten. Also his views on many matters must not be regarded as expressing those of the I.I.P.I.—B.M.K.

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